



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

52 ARRESTED IN FLORIDA STATE DRIVER'S LICENSE SCHEME **-- Enforcement Action Follows Similar Cases in Maryland and Michigan in the Last Week --**

MIAMI, FLA -- Jesus Torres, Special Agent in Charge, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Marcos Daniel Jiménez, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida; United States Department of Homeland Security; William T. Simms, U.S. Secret Service; Fred O. Dickinson, III, Executive Director, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles; Colonel Christopher A. Knight, Director, Florida Highway Patrol; Sandra C. Lambert, Director, Division of Driver's Licenses; Amos Rojas, Jr., Special Agent in Charge, Florida Department of Law Enforcement; and Ric Bradshaw, Sheriff, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, announced today the arrests on criminal charges of twenty-three (23) defendants involved in a scheme to unlawfully produce and distribute Florida state driver's licenses. Of the twenty-three (23) defendants, all of whom were initially charged by criminal complaint, nine (9) have been indicted. Three (3) of the twenty-three (23) defendants worked as State of Florida Driver's License Examiners, five (5) participated in the scheme as recruiters, and fifteen (15) were recipients of the illegally obtained driver's licenses.

A total of fifty-two (52) individuals were taken into custody as a result of this five (5) month multi-agency investigation led by ICE. In addition to the twenty-three (23) criminally charged defendants, another twenty-nine (29) other individuals have been taken into custody by ICE and face administrative charges for violations of immigration laws. Of the fifty-two (52) individuals taken into custody, thirty-six (36) had obtained Florida state commercial driver's licenses, certifications to haul hazardous materials, or access to ports of South Florida.

Defendants **Derene Frasier**, **Tracie Dunlap**, and **Yvette Jackson**, worked as State of Florida Driver's License Examiners. A criminal complaint against Frasier charges her with knowingly and unlawfully producing false identification documents without lawful authority, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028(a)(1). Dunlap and Jackson, also State of Florida Driver's License Examiners, are charged by criminal complaint, along with defendant, Charles Phillip Philome, a recruiter, with conspiracy to produce identification documents without lawful authority, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028(a)(1), (c)(3)(a), and (f); knowingly and unlawfully producing false identification documents without lawful authority, in violation of Title

18, United States Code, Section 1028(a)(1); and wilfully aiding and abetting the production of such documents, violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1028(a)(1), ©(3)(A), and 2. In addition to Philome, four (4) other defendants were involved in the scheme as recruiters.

As reflected in the criminal complaints, the scheme included three (3) Driver's License Examiners and associates working outside that would recruit the commercial license recipients. After contact with a recruiter, the prospective recipients would contact an examiner and conspirators would then contact an examiner and present her with the necessary paperwork. The examiners, as charged, would then falsely certify the illegal alien's citizenship as legal or United States citizen. The examiners would charge a fee of \$100 to \$200, while the recruiters would charge \$1,500 to \$3,000 thousand dollars.

"This investigation has demonstrated how the corrupt acts of driver's license examiners can circumvent our state's licensing procedures," said Mr. Jiménez. "We will continue to vigorously investigate and prosecute anyone who violates the licensing procedures in this state."

"This case illustrates the excellent example of cooperative law enforcement agencies standing untied to aggressively investigate and prosecute those who violate the law in order to provide genuine driver's licenses to illegal aliens and others," said Mr. Torres. "This type of criminal activity poses a national security and public safety risk to our community. Those who engage in these activities must give an account for their actions."

Mr. Jiménez commended the investigative efforts of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Secret Service, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Highway Patrol Division and Driver's Licenses Division, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, as well as the United States Customs and Border Protection/Border Patrol, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Social Security-Office of Inspector General, Department of Transportation-Office of Inspector General, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, United States Marshal's Service, Miami-Dade Police Department, and the Broward County's Sheriff's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Michael Walleisa.

Today's enforcement action in Florida follows similar investigations in Michigan and Maryland in the past week.

On Friday, ICE agents arrested three Marylanders for a scheme to fraudulently obtain Maryland state identification cards. A criminal complaint alleges that from Aug. 31 to Feb. 16, in return for the payment of more than \$1,000 per applicant, Dodson Robey, Margentina Esther Pinilla and Valentin Roosevelt Milstein agreed to provide fraudulent Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) documents to various applicants --many of them illegal aliens-- who sought MVA identification cards or driver's licenses without showing the documentation required under Maryland law. Robey is alleged to have provided more than 100 identification documents in violation of MVA policy. Pinilla, a former employee of the MVA, allegedly recruited individuals who paid her a fee for Robey to produce the fraudulent cards for them. MVA Internal Investigations and the United States Attorney's Office assisted ICE with the investigation.

Last Thursday, ICE agents, assisted by U.S. Postal Inspectors, arrested four individuals, Ali Hawil, Daher Al-Mayahi, Barbara Wilke, and Mohamad Barry, and seized more than \$20,000 and a variety of document-production equipment, as part of an ongoing investigation into the production and trafficking of fraudulent State of Michigan driver's licenses, U.S. Visas, foreign passports and Social Security cards. According to court documents, the investigation began after U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers seized a number of blank Guinea driver's licenses en route to

Hawil. An undercover ICE agent, posing as an Iraqi arms dealer with an Afghan passport, made contact with Hawil, who then arranged a meeting with Al-Mayahi. Al Mayahi demanded several hundred dollars for the driver's license – something Al Mayahi said he'd done "a thousand times."

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.